

- 1 1. A method comprising:
2 operating a managed network of consumer-use
3 processor-based devices; and
4 assigning distributed computing tasks to said
5 processor-based devices.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 including establishing a
2 persistent connection between at least one of said devices
3 and a server.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1 including subdividing a
2 distributed computing job into tasks and assigning each of
3 said tasks to a different device.
- 1 4. The method of claim 3 including logging each task
2 and the assigned device.
- 1 5. The method of claim 4 including developing an
2 estimate of the time to task completion.
- 1 6. The method of claim 5 including, if no results
2 are received after the passage of said time estimate,
3 querying said device.

1 7. The method of claim 5 including automatically
2 requesting said results after the passage of said time
3 estimate.

1 8. The method of claim 1 including maintaining, from
2 a server, the software on said device.

1 9. The method of claim 1 including receiving the
2 results of said task from a device and providing an
3 acknowledgement to said device when the results are
4 received correctly.

1 10. The method of claim 1 including receiving a
2 completion message from a device and automatically
3 establishing an upload session to receive the task results.

1 11. An article comprising a medium storing
2 instructions that enable a processor-based system to:
3 operate a managed network of consumer-use
4 processor-based devices; and
5 assign distributed computing tasks to said
6 processor-based devices.

1 12. The article of claim 11 further storing
2 instructions that enable the processor-based system to

3 establish a persistent connection between at least one of
4 said devices and said system.

1 13. The article of claim 11 further storing
2 instructions that enable the processor-based system to
3 subdivide a distributed computing job into tasks and assign
4 each of said tasks to a different device.

1 14. The article of claim 13 further storing
2 instructions that enable the processor-based system to log
3 each task and the assigned device.

1 15. The article of claim 14 further storing
2 instructions that enable the processor-based system to
3 develop an estimate of the time to task completion.

1 16. The article of claim 15 further storing
2 instructions that enable the processor-based system to
3 query a device if no results are received after the passage
4 of said time estimate.

1 17. The article of claim 15 further storing
2 instructions that enable the processor-based system to
3 automatically request said results after the passage of
4 said time estimate.

1 18. The article of claim 11 further storing
2 instructions that enable the processor-based system to
3 maintain the software on a device.

1 19. The article of claim 11 further storing
2 instructions that enable the processor-based system to
3 receive the results of a task from a device and provide an
4 acknowledgement to said device when the results are
5 received correctly.

1 20. The article of claim 11 further storing
2 instructions that enable the processor-based system to
3 receive a completion message from a device and
4 automatically establish an upload session to receive the
5 task results.

1 21. A system comprising:
2 a processor-based device; and
3 a storage coupled to said processor-based device
4 storing instructions that enable said device to operate a
5 managed network of consumer-use processor-based clients and
6 assign distributed computing tasks to said processor-based
7 clients.

1 22. The system of claim 21 wherein said system is a
2 server.

1 23. The system of claim 22 wherein said server is a
2 system management server.

1 24. The system of claim 21 wherein said processor-
2 based device has a persistent connection with at least one
3 consumer-use processor-based client.

1 25. The system of claim 21 wherein said storage
2 stores instructions that enable said processor-based device
3 to divide a distributed computing job into a plurality of
4 tasks, assign said tasks to specific processor-based
5 clients, and estimate the time to complete said job by said
6 clients.

*add
a'*